

Message Text

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E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, RQ

SUBJECT:PUERTO RICO AND LIMA CONFERENCE

1. EMBASSY MAY FIND USEFUL FOLLOWING INFO RE PUERTO RICO.

RECENT UN SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON DECOLONIZATION (COMMITTEE OF 24) REVIEWED PUERTO RICO AS "NON SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORY" ALTHOUGH PR UNDER UNGA RES 748 WAS REMOVED FROM LIST OF NON SELF GOVERNING TERRITORIES IN 1953.

2. CUBA, SYRIA, IRAQ, CONGO, AND MALI COSPONSORED RESOLUTIONS RECOGNIZING "PUERTO RICAN NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT AS REPRESENTING THE LEGITIMATE ASPIRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF PUERTO RICO STRUGGLING FOR INDEPENDENCE." INSTEAD, COMMITTEE PASSED (11-9-2) AUSTRALIAN MOTION TO PONE CONSIDERATION OF PR UNTIL 1976. (THIS FOLLOWED HIGHEST LEVEL DEMARCHE IN CAPITALS OF COMMITTEE OF 24 MEMBERS INDICATING US POSITION ON PR.) WHILE COMMITTEE ACTION WAS

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BLOW TO CUBANS IT LIKELY THAT CUBA WILL ATTEMPT GENERATE

STRONG SUPPORT FOR RES ON PR IN LIMA. CUBA ALSO HOSTING CONFERENCE ON SOLIDARITY FOR INDEPENDENCE FOR PR SEPTEMBER 15 AND 16. IF SUCCESSFUL, IT POSSIBLE THAT CUBA MAY RAISE PR AS ITEM IN UN 4TH COMMITTEE AND GA PLENARY. SHOULD SUBJECT COME UP, EMBASSY MAY WISH TO USE FOLLOWING TALKING POINTS.

3. WE REGARD ANY INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF PUERTO RICO AS

"NON SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORY" AS FLAGRANT INTERFERENCE INTO USG DOMESTIC AFFAIRS.

A. PUERTO RICO EXERCISED RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION IN APPROVING 1952 CONSTITUTION (IN 1951 REFERENDUM BY 387,016 VOTES IN FAVOR TO 119,169 AGAINST) AND ACCORDINGLY WAS REMOVED FROM UN LIST OF NON SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES BY 1953 8TH UNGA. THE US IS THEREFORE NO LONGER OBLIGATED TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON PUERTO RICO IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 73 (C) OF CHARTER. 1971 26TH UNGA IMPLICITLY UPHELD THIS DECISION BY REJECTING CUBAN EFFORT TO INSCRIBE PUERTO RICAN ISSUE ON AGENDA.

B. COMMONWEALTH STATUS APPROVED IN 1952 WAS REAFFIRMED IN ISLAND-WIDE REFERENDUM IN 1967. PUERTO RICANS VOTED AS FOLLOWS ON THEIR STATUS WITH US: FOR COMMONWEALTH 60.41 PERCENT; FOR STATEHOOD 38.98 PERCENT; FOR INDEPENDENCE .60 PERCENT. SIXTY PERCENT OF ELIGIBLE VOTERS VOTED (707,293 OF 1,067,349 ELIGIBLE). IN AUGUST 1972 GENERAL ELECTIONS, BOYCOTTED BY PRO-INDEPENDENCE PUERTO RICAN SOCIALIST PARTY SUPPORTED BY CUBA, INDEPENDENCE PARTY ONLY RECEIVED 4 PERCENT OF VOTE. THEREFORE, PRO-INDEPENDENCE FORCES IN PUERTO RICO REPRESENT MINUSCULE MINORITY OF PUERTO RICANS AS INDICATED IN VARIOUS POPULAR VOTES.

C. RECOGNITION OF A "PUERTO RICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT" IS UNACCEPTABLE TO US IN LIGHT OF THE FACT THAT SELF-DETERMINATION PROCESS HAS ALREADY OCCURRED IN PUERTO RICO (1953).

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D. AS WAS STATED BY THE US REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UN IN QUOTING PRESIDENT EISENHOWER, THE PRESIDENT WOULD BE PREPARED TO RECOMMEND TO THE U.S. CONGRESS TO CONSIDER FAVORABLY GRANTING INDEPENDENCE TO PUERTO RICO IN THE EVENT OF A CLEAR MANIFESTATION BY THE PEOPLE OF PUERTO RICO THAT THEY WISH INDEPENDENCE. INGERSOLL

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